

Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge
Annual Narrative 2001



The Refuge Fire Crew and Maintenance Staff took great pride in erecting our new flag pole at the main Refuge Corrals.

Photo by Jill Coleman.

H. <u>PUBLIC USE</u>	3
1. <u>General</u>	3
2. <u>Adult Environmental Education</u>	3
a. Community Outreach	4
b. Youth Education	5
3. <u>Outdoor Classrooms - Students</u>	6
a. Native American Environmental Education	8
b. Treasure Lake Job Corps Environmental Education	8
4. <u>Interpretive Foot Trails</u>	10
5. <u>Interpretive Programs</u>	11
8. <u>Hunting</u>	12
a. Deer	12
b. Elk	13
9. <u>Fishing</u>	13
10. <u>Trapping</u>	14
11. <u>Wildlife Observation</u>	14
a. Birding Opportunities	14
b. Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs	15
c. Large Game Wildlife	15
12. <u>Other Wildlife-Oriented Recreation</u>	16
13. <u>Camping</u>	16
14. <u>Picnicking</u>	18
15. <u>Off-Road Vehicle Travel</u>	18
16. <u>Other Non-wildlife Oriented Recreation</u>	18
a. Bicycling	18
b. Rock Climbing	18
c. Jogging	20
d. Swimming	20
17. <u>Law Enforcement</u>	20
18. <u>Cooperating Association</u>	21
19. <u>Concessions</u>	21

H. PUBLIC USE

1. General

The 22,400 acre public use portion of the Refuge offers visitors the opportunity to broaden their knowledge and appreciation of the natural environment through direct exposure to wildlife and wildlands. Permitted



Visitors enjoy a day at the Refuge watching the prairie dogs and bison. SW

recreational uses such as wildlife observation, hiking, and fishing provide the public an opportunity to gain a renewed commitment to the value of environmental stewardship. The visiting public has access to over 50 miles of scenic roads, four designated picnic areas, three forms of camping opportunities, and a five-mile mountain biking route. Within the public use area lies the 5,700 acre Charons Garden Wilderness Area which received special designation and protection under the Wilderness Act of 1964. This pristine area offers Refuge visitors a chance to experience the solitude of wilderness lands. In order to maintain the wilderness character of this area, more stringent guidelines apply to regulating public uses in the Charons Garden Wilderness Area. The visitor center continues to be popular and provides excellent interpretation of the Refuge and the natural history of the area.

2. Adult Environmental Education

The Adult Education component comprises the most complex section of the Environmental Education Program. Approximately 40% of all activity hours were provided to adult participants. Programs falling under this section range from university-accredited courses to teacher workshops and community outreach projects. The partnership between Cameron University and the Refuge over the years has resulted in the development of more than a dozen Environmental Education courses for university credit. The college courses taught in 2001 included two Global Change classes, Spring Birds, Prairie Ecology, Winter Birds, Environmental Ethics, Elk, Birds of Prey and Wichita Naturalist Workshops. The classes continue to be in high demand, receiving excellent feedback from student attendees. These courses fill very quickly, leaving many students on waiting lists for openings. The workshops use hands-on activities, research, journaling sessions, and personal introduction to the environment to involve the students in controversial environmental issues. They are taken from a state of awareness to appreciation, and ultimately, responsible human action. The students learn how to examine human biases and values as they apply to wildlife and their habitat, as well as the consumptive uses of our natural resources

Cameron is not the only university to recognize the benefits of the Refuge EE Program. Several other area colleges and universities are discovering the unique learning environment of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Students from Waylon Baptist College, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, Western Oklahoma State College, Miami Junior College, Oklahoma City University, and Midwestern State University attend EE classes ranging from Ecology to Spider Morphology.



SW

Medicine Park was the site of the Oklahoma Chapter of The Nature Conservancy's 2001 Annual Membership Meeting and Field Trip. Environmental Education staff and interns led various field trips throughout the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Conservancy members were faced with the dilemma of choosing their favorite subject. They were confronted by choices between birds, butterflies, native plants, prairie dogs, elk or a hike through Charon's Garden Wilderness Area, just to name a few. Intern Nick Plata even made an appearance in the *Oklahoma Conservator*, a publication by the Oklahoma Chapter of The Nature Conservancy.

The EE staff and interns developed and implemented a teacher training workshop with Lawton Public Schools (LPS) in conjunction with the Earth Stewards Program. A group of teachers from the LPS Gifted and Talented Program attended the training workshop. They discussed various ways of bringing environmental education into the traditional classroom setting. Once the teachers completed the training workshop, they returned with their students for a week-long EE program conducted at the Refuge.

The section provided EE training for "Naturalists" from River Bend Nature Center located in Wichita Falls, Texas. EE staff and interns presented and demonstrated various activities ranging from water quality to identifying the different learning styles of students. The participants were given ideas and information on developing an EE program tailored to fit the resources surrounding the nature center.

The National Meeting for Directors of Biological Stations was held in Oklahoma this year. Dr. Lawrence Weider, director of The University of Oklahoma Biological Station hosted the meeting. Dr. Weider chose the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge for the annual field trip, which EE staff led into the Special Use Area of the Refuge. The directors were split into three groups, dependent upon his/her major field of study or interest. They were given the choice of field trips focusing on birds, native plants, or environmental issues/concerns.

a. Community Outreach

The Oklahoma Association for Environmental Education (OKAEE) asked Claudine Daniel, Refuge EE Program Director, to speak at their Annual Environmental Education Expo held in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Claudine gave a presentation entitled "Sustainability of Public Lands". Her speech was geared toward educating the public to appreciate quality over quantity.

Claudine presented a break-out session at The National Convention for State Park Directors held this past year in Oklahoma City. The theme of the session focused on “Education as Visitation”.

Art Professor Bob Dorlac, of Southwest Oklahoma State College (SWOSC), along with EE staff, planned and developed a workshop which allowed “teaching through the other side of the brain”. It incorporates art in a non-traditional approach as a method of teaching environmental education.

Christina Cocek from the Galef Institute contacted the Refuge concerning assistance with developing a children’s book depicting the “real” history of Oklahoma. The history of Oklahoma will be part of a series entitled “America Moves On: 1776 to the Present”. It includes the biological aspects of the era, along with the changing quality of life due to the impacts man has made on the environment. The Galef Institute is known best for developing non-traditional learning curricula that teaches through various different learning styles.

Keystone Science School along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has developed an Earth Stewards Program which will be implemented across the United States. An Earth Stewards Program was designed specifically for the Lawton area, and a Cooperative Agreement between the Refuge, the Museum of the Great Plains and Lawton Public Schools was established to implement the program.



SW

The Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge EE section has hosted the state Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest for the past eight years. The Federal Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program integrates science and art curricula developed to teach environmental science and habitat conservation. The goal of the program is to develop conservation through the arts, where students use visual rather than verbal articulation to show what they have learned. Claudine Daniel, the Junior Duck

Stamp State Coordinator, received entries from K through 12th grade students from across the state. This year’s entries were available for viewing by the public at the WMWR Visitor Center, where they remained on display for the months of September and October. The program benefits waterfowl and their habitats by developing a greater awareness of our nation’s natural resources.

b. Youth Education

Over half (53%) of the Refuge EE Program participant numbers are accounted for by the Youth EE project activities. Most youth programs are approximately four hours in length, which account for over 45% of all activity hours provided by the Refuge EE Program.

Most programs are conducted at the Environmental Education Center at Quanah Parker Lake. The classes consist primarily of students associated with public and private schools from across Oklahoma and Texas. Scout troops, youth groups, home-schools, and Science Academies also make up a large number of youth participants. Since most youth programs are conducted on the Refuge, there is an endless array of subject

diversity available to them. Medicinal and edible plants, bats, birds, wildlife tracks, spiders, prairie dogs, bison, aquatics, geology, and animal adaptations are just a few of the topics covered in the youth EE programs.



Randy Hale providing students
edible plants of the Wichita Mountains.
Staff photo

Elk are always popular topics of discussion in EE
programs. SW

Scouting groups make up a large majority of youth programs held on weekends. Girl Scouts from Southwest Oklahoma visited the Refuge on many occasions in conjunction with the program Linking Girls to the Land. Girls working on badges or patches in subject areas such as wildlife, ecology, plant life, and eco-action, attend various environmental education classes. The programs were not designed to be badge workshops. They were conducted in a way which allowed the girls to use what was learned to fulfill all requirements for the badge. The USFWS has partnered with Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. to offer joint conservation and outdoor projects to girls across the United States. The goal of the program is to “link girls to the land” while working together to conserve natural resources.

3. Outdoor Classrooms - Students

The Environmental Education program owes a great deal of its success to the partnerships which have been established with area universities. The universities provide internships for college students majoring in biology. The Interns have enhanced the EE program and are valuable teaching resources.

Cameron University provides three EE Internships for undergraduate Biology majors, two being general EE interns (David Barrett and David Gilchrist), and one intern specializing in Native American Environmental Education (Nick Plata).

David Gilchrist researched, developed, and planned his own white-tailed deer workshop. He also helped the

biological section with the annual deer survey.

A sharp eye and great love for Ornithology undoubtedly earned David Barrett the nick-name “the bird guy”. David assisted the Biological program in trapping brown-headed cowbirds in order to promote the nesting success of the endangered Black-Capped Vireo.

Nick Plata, an enrolled member of the Comanche Tribe, is the section’s Native American Environmental Educator. Nick has been the Native American EE Intern since the inception of the program in June of 1998. His love and commitment to the land shows in everything he does. Nick spends the majority of his time working with the surrounding Plains Indian Tribes. He tries to reestablish the close relationship Native American people had with the land. Nick has modified his approach to invite Native cultures to participate in an environmental education program as a culture, without being mainstreamed by public education. The Native American students are provided a positive role model in a program designed to accommodate their cultural filter.

Midwestern State University

Midwestern State University has expanded its initial graduate studies internship to include an undergraduate internship, allowing internship opportunities for both graduate (D’Anna Mata) and undergraduate (Deena Brown) Biological Science majors. After completing a course in Araneology, D’Anna quickly became known as “the spider woman”. D’Anna uses her expertise of spiders to focus on the ecology and adaptation of species in the WMWR. She developed spider workshops for both Langston University and The Friends of the Wichitas.

Deena Brown, a Biology and Geology major at MSU, ultimately proved to be the section’s Geologist. She relays to the students that the unique geology of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge is the basis of its diverse plant and animal life.

a. Native American Environmental Education

Nick Plata, our Native American Environmental Educator, has developed an EE program tailored for a Plains Indian audience. Nick has modified his approach to invite Native cultures to participate in an environmental education program as a culture, without being mainstreamed by public education. Nick provides the students with a positive role model in a program designed to accommodate their cultural filter.

Nick encourages each student to bring a family member or a tribal elder. He uses story telling as a form of education, and allows others to share their culture with the class. Nick invites the children and their family to sing songs, dance or even show how an Indian hand game is played. These are all great ways to help an Indian student achieve a sense of place and acceptance in the environment. Many times, family elders will share stories of the Wichita Mountains with the group. The elders tell stories of times of drought, of where the last buffalo in the area was killed, and about the powerful medicine found in the feathers of the Yellow Hammer (Northern Flicker) and the hair of the bison's beard. By listening to the elders telling stories of the earth, the children develop a deeper understanding of their integral role in the environment.

Many Native American presenters are invited to the Refuge to share their special tools with the students.



A group of Native American participants enjoying the beauty found along a trail at the Environmental Education center.

Delaware presenter, Melanie Watkins, covered water quality, conservation and pollution. Motivational Speaker and Comanche tribal member, Lee Juarez, shares personal experience and real life situations with the students. Mr. Juarez uses his Native American background to relate to specific incidents in the student's lives. Randy Palmer visited the Refuge to show the students how to set up a teepee "the Kiowa way." He allowed the students who participated to use it as their shelter for the night. Delaware woodcarver, Mike Watkins, spoke of how his ancestors obtained all their needs from the deciduous forest of the northeast, as he demonstrated the skill of

woodcarving and allowed the students to practice the craft themselves.

b. Treasure Lake Job Corps Environmental Education

The Job Corps EE Project for At-Risk Youth comprises 25% of the participant numbers serviced by the Refuge EE program. The Job Corps EE Project began in Fall 1993, when a task force of personnel from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Job Corps, and outside consultants worked together to develop a proposal for instituting environmental education at Job Corps. Aside from the regular fishing, camping and hiking trips, the students have been involved in many meaningful Community Service related activities.

The Job Corps EE Program has provided an enormous amount of community outreach and positive public

relations with surrounding communities. After attending approximately five to six hours of EE activities, most participants return to continue as long-term EE students and mentors. Typically, a pool of fifteen students is selected to represent the Refuge as EE Mentors.

The Project has proven to be a successful program. Many students have used their new values to make positive changes for the environment and surrounding communities. Nine alumni of the program have gone to work for the USFWS on various refuges across the country. Two workers have subsequently transferred back to the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge as maintenance staff.

Treasure Lake Job Corps mentors stole the show on “Job Corps Day” at the State Capitol in Oklahoma City. Their wildlife booth drew considerable attention to the third floor rotunda. Various skulls, hides, and other wildlife-related artifacts were on display for visitors. The students provided informative interpretation of the objects relating them back to their natural environment. TLJC plastering students presented all of our area legislators with handmade owl bookends.

The mentors also made a big splash at the Comanche County Fair with their water quality activities. They provided over 1,000 area students with valuable learning experiences along with the opportunity to scrape the “Bison Hide Background.”

Four Job Corps EE mentors did a wonderful job teaching survival skills at the Southeast Oklahoma 4-H District Leadership Workshop held at Lake Murray. Following the survival skills class, the students led a hands-on outside activity with an extension to wildlife. The mentors demonstrated skills learned in the classroom setting. They focused mainly on making fire, constructing leaf shelters, using a compass, and locating and identifying edible plants.

For the eighth year in a row, TLJC students manned the Earth Day booth for fifth-graders from Cotton County. Deena Brown, along with four EE mentors, traveled to Walters Elementary School to participate



Job Corps mentors providing area students with valuable learning experiences at the Comanche County Fair.

in “Earth Day” Activities.

Over 500 citizens visited the TLJC booth at the Oklahoma State Fair. The mentors supplied anyone who was

willing to listen with information about Treasure Lake Job Corps and the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge.

On several occasions, Job Corps mentors helped EE Specialist Randy Hale conduct hour-long presentations to local civic organizations. Randy Hale, EE Specialist assigned to Job Corps, received the 2001 Environmental Quality Award from the Environmental Concerns Committee. This is the first time an educator outside of Lawton has been selected for the award.

Of course, the EE mentors have been very active on the Refuge with a variety of habitat management and education projects. Students participated in several aquatic plant removal and lake clean-up projects. They were eager to lend a helping hand for multi-day classes held on the Refuge for Cameron University. At the annual longhorn and bison auctions, Job Corps students helped move the animals through the sale ring, and also assisted in parking cars, loading the animals, and more importantly, kept the site clean and free of litter. The mentors also assisted Refuge employees with the annual elk and deer hunts. On several occasions, the Job Corps mentors helped the EE Section with large groups from area schools.

4. Interpretive Foot Trails



Call of Autumn

Fall has a sound all its own in Oklahoma's Wichita Mountains.

On a mountainside strewn with boulders the color of old copper pennies, an elk lifts his head high and trumpets the beauty of autumn in southwestern Oklahoma. It's a mating call, known as bugling, that's meant to be sweet music to the ears of a female elk. But on this tawny and golden late September afternoon, a few humans are lucky enough to be listening too.

"Once I saw an elk standing on the

The bus is a rolling observation post. ½ mile through an open area flanked

Friends of the Wichitas Elk Tours were featured in *Southern Living Magazine*

An interpretive foot trail is located at the Environmental Education Center at Quanah Parker Lake. This wheelchair-accessible trail offers five stops with panels describing wetlands, animals, waterfowl, biodiversity and an introduction to the work of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

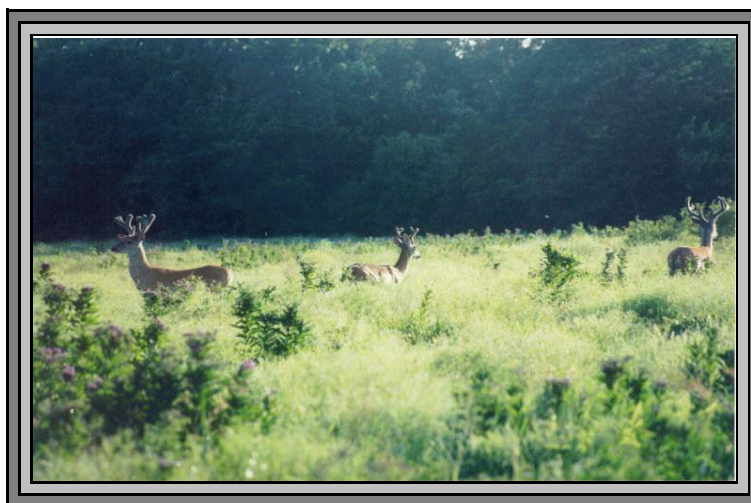
The Refuge offers approximately 15 miles of established hiking trails for the visiting public. Beyond this system, many more miles of bison-trodden foot paths lead to recreation spots. Hikers take trails of varying length and duration winding through post oak/ blackjack oak woodland, across rocky boulder fields, along riparian areas, and through grassland communities. Volunteers work with staff to maintain the established trails - erosion control, litter clean-up and vegetation trimming are on-going activities.

5. Interpretive Programs

Public interpretive programs are designed by the staff and presented by the Association of the Friends of the Wichitas (FOW). Volunteer interpreters attend orientations and training as well as specific programs where they participate as interns. Training is led by Refuge staff, science professionals, and experienced volunteers.

The FOW programs provide abundant opportunities to learn about the unique resources of the Wichita Mountains. The tour year starts with Eagle Tours, then proceeds with History, Wilderness Hikes, Wildflower Walks, and Wildlife Tours. Autumn Bugling Elk Tours (the most popular offering) are followed by Fall Foliage Walks and the year winds down with another Wilderness Hike. Star-gazing programs are also offered on four occasions throughout the year, highlighting astronomical events and taking advantage of the dark skies of the Refuge, which are relatively free of light-pollution.

A total of 48 educational/interpretive tours were scheduled for the year, each emphasizing the importance of native habitats and management techniques that keep the Refuge in as natural a state as possible, while promoting positive environmental ethics.



SW

8. Hunting

The Refuge held its annual deer and elk management hunts during November and December. Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation assisted with the hunts by randomly selecting hunters and providing staff to serve as group leaders, and furnishing a Game Warden for hunt violations that occurred. Refuge personnel served as group leaders on all hunts, and our Refuge law enforcement staff were involved in hunt related situations.

a. Deer

One 2 ½ day white-tailed deer hunt was held. 111 permits were issued (31 antlered & 80 antlerless) with 87 hunters paying fees to attend, but only 79 (31 antlered & 48 antlerless) hunters attending orientation and participating in the hunt. 67.7% of the buck hunters were successful, and 60% of the doe hunters. The overall success rate was 63%.



Non-ambulatory hunters also enjoy participating in Refuge management hunts. All six of our non-ambulatory hunters successfully filled their tags this year. Photo by Judy Franklin.

b. Elk

Elk hunts were held on 12/4-6/01, 12/11-13/01 and 12/18-20/01, with 90 permits (35 bull and 55 cow) issued for each hunt.

The first hunt had a 94% participation rate by bull hunters and an 89% participation rate from cow hunters. Thirty antlered and 32 antlerless animals

(including 2 yr/lg bulls) were removed for an overall 67% success rate during the first hunt.

The second hunt had an 91% participation rate with bull hunters and an 89% rate for cow hunters. A total of 43 animals were removed during this hunt, for a 53% success rate. The lower success rate of this hunt is attributed to poor weather conditions encountered.

The third hunt had a 97% participation rate with bull hunters and an 87% rate for cow hunters. A total of 59 animals were removed during this hunt, for a 72% success rate.

Overall Results:

Bull Permits: Ninety-nine hunters removed eighty-six animals for a 87% success rate.

Cow Permits: One hundred forty-six hunters removed seventy-eight animals for a 53% success rate.

All Hunts: Two hundred forty-five hunters removed one hundred sixty-four animals for a 67% success rate.

9. Fishing

Fishing is permitted in all lakes within the Public Use portion of the Refuge. Warm water species of black bass, catfish, crappie, and sunfish are sought by anglers year-round. It is estimated that 5% of the total visits to the Refuge are for fishing. Accessible fishing piers are available at Elmer Thomas Lake and at Quannah Parker Lake. Hand powered boats and boats up to 14 feet in length with electric trolling motors are permitted

on Jed Johnson, Rush, Quanah Parker and French Lakes. A boat launch ramp is maintained at Elmer Thomas Lake where sailboats and motor boats of any size are permitted under the stipulation of the no-wake rule on the entire lake surface.

10. Trapping

Trapping of brown-headed cowbirds to assist the nesting success of black-capped vireo continues on the Refuge, as does the relocation of raccoons away from the cowbird traps. See Section D.5.a for details.

Feral hog trapping was successful this year in removing many of the non-native animals from the Refuge.

11. Wildlife Observation

Oklahoma occupies a unique position on the North American continent. Lying in the southern portion of the Great Plains, the state is a natural transition zone between eastern woodlands and western grasslands. The climatic diversity of Oklahoma is enormous, with the northwest panhandle receiving less than 20 inches of precipitation annually, while the southeast corner is drenched with as much as 56 inches of rainfall in a single year. This three-foot difference in precipitation helps to support a wide variety of habitats in Oklahoma.



Visitors can get quick glimpses of some of the more secretive animals found on the Refuge.
SW

The Wichita Mountains are central to much of the biological diversity found within the state's eleven biotic districts. The Refuge serves as a varied and vital oasis for native wildlife amid the surrounding cities and agricultural lands. While the majority of the Refuge's plant communities are classified as Mixed-grass Prairie, the landscape is also home for Eastern Deciduous components, arid rockland species, and riparian zone dwellers. This abundant diversity, combined with the scarcity of federally-protected public lands in this area, make the Refuge a focal point for naturalists, researchers, and wildlife enthusiasts.

a. Birding Opportunities

Over 278 species of birds are known to inhabit the Refuge - whether as seasonal migrants, summer nesters, or year-round residents. A checklist of birds is available at the Refuge Visitor Center, Headquarters Office, and online at the Refuge's website or at the following internet address:

<http://www.npsc.nbs.gov/resource/othrdata/chekbird/r2/wichita.htm>

The Environmental Education Center Complex has a gazebo-like Outdoor Classroom building that has been converted into a large "bird blind", with seed feeders and watering areas placed near the structure. The project provides opportunities for students to get up-close looks at birds feeding and nesting without disturbing the animals.

b. Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs

The Refuge maintains three active Prairie Dog towns within the Public Use Area. The Turkey Creek Prairie Dog Town is the largest and most active, due to having been established several years before the other two towns. The town is a highly visible feature of the Refuge, and its centralized, accessible location makes it a popular spot for all our visitors.

c. Large Game Wildlife

American Bison, Rocky Mountain Elk and White-tailed Deer roam freely throughout the Refuge, and sighting of these animals are a highlight of many visitors' experience here.

The public is invited to record their sightings of various species of wildlife in small journals that are kept on the counters at the Visitor Center and at Refuge Headquarters.



12. Other Wildlife-Oriented Recreation

The scenic landscape and variety of wildlife species makes the Refuge popular with photographers and artists.



The spring season usually offers spectacular wildflower displays in grassy meadows. Newborn bison are also popular attractions during spring. The view from Mt. Scott summit is popular year round and is noteworthy for viewing and photography. Many visitors simply enjoy the scenic drive through the Refuge, never stopping or leaving their car, seeking a respite from the stresses of the work day and urban environments.

13. Camping

Overnight camping opportunities are provided at

Doris Campground for families and individuals with 90 campsites ranging from semi-primitive tent camping to sites with electric hookups. Individual campsites have cooking grills, camp fire rings, and picnic tables. Restrooms and showers are centrally located. Three group sites are also available by reservation for large groups. Fawn Creek Youth Campground is offered for organized youth groups and scout groups and is managed under a reservation system. It is a more primitive setting than Doris Campground and allows scouts to conduct ceremonial activities without disturbing other campers. For those seeking a more wilderness experience, backcountry camping is permitted in Charons Garden Wilderness Area under a permit and reservation system. No more than 10 campers are allowed in the backcountry at one time and length of stay is limited to three days and two nights per permit period.



Doris Campground.

The following table summarizes camping activities at Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge during calendar year 2001:

CAMPING ON THE WICHITAS 2001							
Month	Fawn Creek		Doris Group Sites A,B,C		Doris Individual Sites		Backcountry Camping
	Groups	Campers	Groups	Campers	Sites	Campers	Campers
January	32	618	6	105	133	288	41
February	10	220	1	12	200	580	38
March	62	1,259	26	645	1,116	3,976	64
April	45	1,181	20	420	966	3,572	180
May	41	886	25	521	1,108	3,514	186
June	34	600	23	413	781	2,186	196
July	2	60	10	163	342	1,039	81
August	3	42	7	130	314	803	30
September	30	665	18	412	830	2,881	99
October	51	1,134	23	476	1,190	3,360	162
November	45	1,004	21	417	854	2,622	123
December	28	748	9	132	478	932	144
Totals	401	8,767	189	3,846	8,312	25,753	1,344

14. Picnicking

This activity is permitted in four designated areas on the Refuge: Mt. Scott, Lost Lake, Boulder, and Sunset Picnic Areas. Charcoal grills and picnic tables are provided at individual sites in each area and restroom facilities are also provided. Boulder Cabin Group Picnic area is available by reservation for group gatherings of up to 60 people and is the only location that provides a shelter.

15. Off-Road Vehicle Travel

This activity is prohibited on the Refuge.

16. Other Non-wildlife Oriented Recreation

a. Bicycling

Bicycles are permitted on all Refuge roads that are open to vehicle traffic. Bicycles are prohibited on hiking trails and off-road or cross-country travel is not allowed. The Mt. Scott service road has been designated as a mountain bicycle trail offering visitors a rugged and challenging experience away from vehicle traffic. No group activities or special events are allowed. The mountain bike trail is located on the east and north sides of Mt. Scott with access points at the Cedar Planting parking area or adjacent to Highway 49 diagonally north and west from the Elmer Thomas Lake Parking area.

Three significant bicycle tour events are held, in part, on the Refuge each year: the "Tour of the Wichitas" and the "Tour de Meers", both of which register hundreds of riders for each event, and the St. Jude's Children's

Hospital Benefit Ride. These events are organized and conducted by private organizations and sponsors. Special Use Permits are issued to organizers allowing for water stops and aid stations at designated locations on the Refuge. In late November, the Goodyear Bicycle Club held a club ride on the Refuge beginning at the Elmer Thomas Pier Parking Area. Approximately 40 riders made their way to the west entrance and returned. The event was completed by noon and no aid stations were needed. It is not uncommon to see bicycle riders in small groups riding Refuge roads on weekend mornings throughout the year.



The bison often create traffic jams for visitors to enjoy.

SW

b. Rock Climbing

Technical rock climbing is allowed during daylight hours throughout the Public Use portion of the Refuge and is managed by special regulations developed during compatibility reviews of 1994-95. Under those special regulations, a portion the "Narrows" Canyon was closed to rock climbing activity for a five year test period during which the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) was to conduct research to determine what, if any, impacts were occurring as a result of climbing and other recreational uses of the area. On December

1, 2000 RM Waldstein allowed the opening of climbing areas on the east and north sides of West Cache Creek downstream from Boulder Cabin in the area known as the “Narrows” after survey results did not support continued closure.

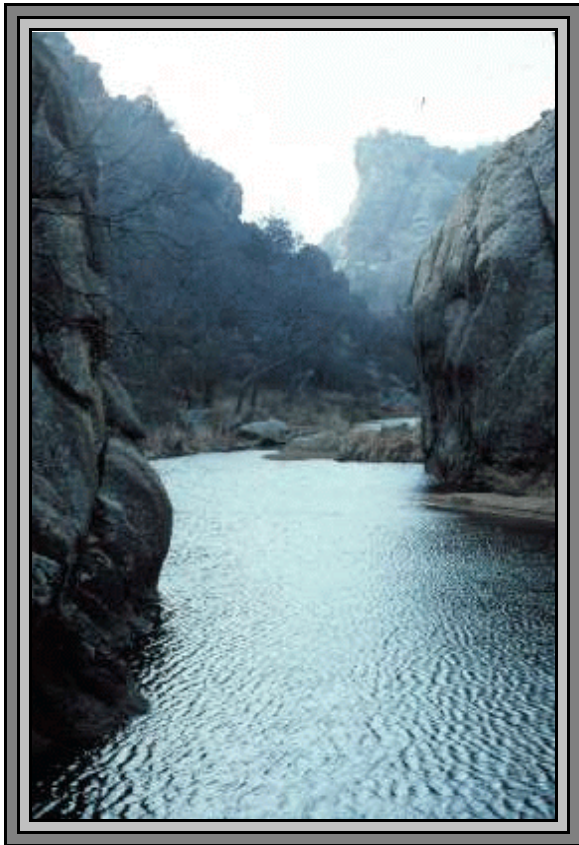
The Wichita Mountains Climbers Coalition (WMCC) continued in its sixth year as a chartered non-profit volunteer organization and provides guidance and assistance to the USFWS on climbing issues at Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. The Memorandum of Understanding between the WMCC and USFWS was renewed in May 2001 for a five year period. The goal of the WMCC is to preserve the integrity of both the Refuge rock climbing resources and the natural environment in which rock climbing activity occurs. The WMCC also provides volunteer support to the USFWS for conservation projects on the Refuge from litter pickup to trail construction and maintenance.

The placement of fixed anchors (bolts), including replacement of existing anchors, is prohibited without the approval of the Refuge Manager through the Advisory Bolting Committee (ABC). The ABC includes three members of the WMCC and one Refuge staff member and the committee is responsible for assisting the

USFWS in reviewing fixed anchor protection at the Refuge. An application procedure is in place for climbers interested in establishing new routes and for improving existing routes. Applications for installation of fixed anchors in Wilderness Areas are on hold pending final issuance of a national policy regarding this activity.

The ABC reviewed several applications for upgrading fixed anchors on established climbing routes. The Refuge Manager approved applications for replacement bolts and anchors on:

- three routes in Charons Garden Wilderness Area on the formation known as Lost Dome, and two routes on the formation known as “Crab Eyes”
- two belay anchors on one route in the area known as the “Meadows”
- two belay anchors and one lead bolt on two routes on Lower Mt. Scott
- reinstall four lead bolts and add one belay station on a route in the “Narrows” and add a new belay station above an established route also in the “Narrows”
- three lead bolts on one route in the area known as 40 Foot Hole .



The Narrows are a popular climbing area.

Several illegally installed bolts were discovered on routes in the Charons Garden Wilderness Area and reported by rock climbers during the summer of 2001.

After much investigation and debate among themselves, the guilty party was never identified. At the request of the Refuge Manager the illegal bolts were removed by the ABC.

Special Use Permits were issued to four commercial operators for guiding and instruction services conducted on Refuge lands.

c. Jogging

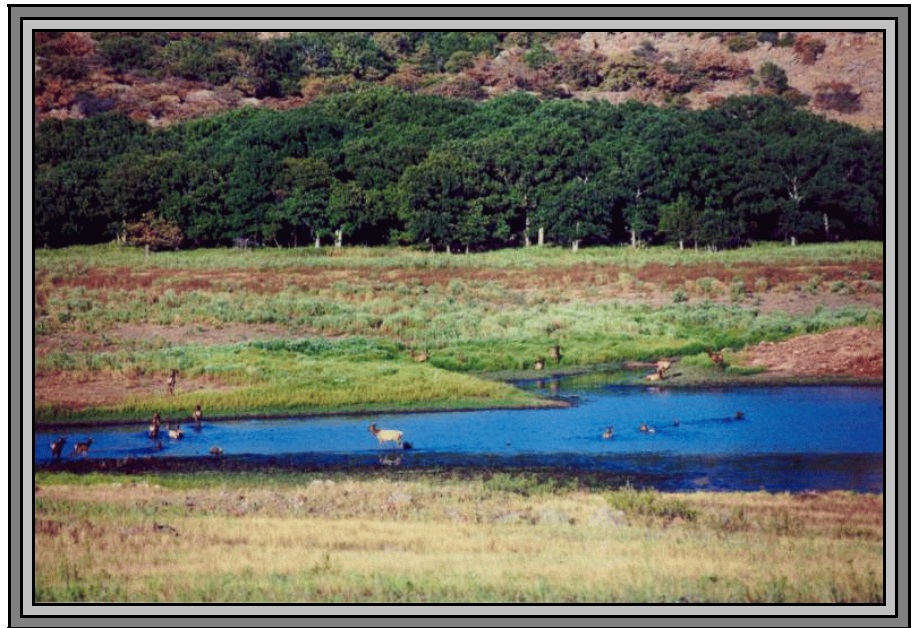
Individuals occasionally can be seen running along paved roads and on trails although it is not a popular activity on the Refuge. A few regular visitors like to run or walk up Mt. Scott in the early morning hours before the gate is open to vehicle traffic. No group activities or special events are allowed.

d. Swimming

This activity is prohibited on the Refuge by Special Regulation and regular patrols by Refuge Officers resulted in numerous tickets and warnings (see H. 17.).

17. Law Enforcement

The Refuge law enforcement program received several enhancements during the year. A second Ford Crown Victoria law enforcement patrol car was received and fully equipped with new technical equipment including in-car video. Another Guardian 2000 remote surveillance camera unit, extra color zoom cameras and a day/night camera were also purchased. Refuge officer duty belts and holsters were replaced with Blackhawk nylon gear. Extra handcuffs, belly chains, leg irons, batons and evidence room storage safes



Swimming on the Refuge is prohibitedunless you have hooves.
SW

were purchased. A third full-time officer (Dan Schneider) arrived in June. Supervision of the law enforcement program was delegated to Deputy Refuge Manager/Refuge Officer Ralph Bryant at the beginning of the year after the transfer of Ann Timberman to the Region 6 Regional Office in Denver, CO.

Law Enforcement activity continues to be demanding. A total of 918 citations and 2,922 warnings were issued this year by the three full-time and two collateral duty officers. A total of 43 individuals were arrested and 41 juvenile incidents handled. Officers handled 18 motor vehicle accidents, five rock climbing accidents, 22 lost person incidents, 15 vandalism cases and nine other visitor injury situations.

The majority of the citations were issued for traffic violations (578). We are amazed at the number of drivers that have never had a driver's license or drive while suspended or revoked. There were 161 citations for possession of alcohol and 44 for marijuana or other controlled substances.

Court cases are prosecuted through the U.S. Magistrate's court in nearby Lawton, OK. The Assistant U.S. Attorneys that prosecute our cases are Army JAG officers from Ft. Sill Military Post. We have a very good working relationship with the magistrate and JAG officers. There seems to be a high turnover rate of the JAG officers, so we periodically need to re-educate them as to the Refuge's purposes, law enforcement program

and prosecution needs.

18. Cooperating Association

Public Lands Interpretive Association (PLIA) is a non-profit educational organization whose mission is to support public lands, and the agencies that manage them, through education and service. PLIA provides educational and interpretive materials to visitor centers and other facilities for the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. PLIA has an award-winning publishing program that produces guide books, brochures, posters, postcards and other interpretive materials, which provide information about public land resources.

Since the opening of the new visitor center, the bookstore, operated by the PLIA, has seen phenomenal increases in sales. This is due to the increase in visitors, the increase in inventory, the attractive sales setting, and the added staff at the store. Whereas 1996 saw a \$17,752 return in gross sales at the old location, 2001 sales totaled \$154,264.29.

19. Concessions

One concession permit is issued to the campground manager to sell camping related supplies such as firewood, snacks, ice and topographic maps.